


THE
HOLY LAND:


A
POEM.

BY
FRANCIS WRANGHAM, M.A.


MEMBER OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.



Crescite Felices, Eoæ Crescite palmæ.

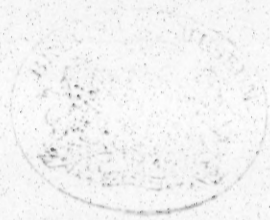


Cambridge,
PRINTED BY JOHN BURGESS, PRINTER TO THE UNIVERSITY;
AND SOLD BY J. DEIGHTON, CAMBRIDGE; AND J. MAWMAN, NO. 22,
POULTRY, LONDON.



1800.

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TO

THE REV. *CHARLES SYMMONS*, D. D.

RECTOR OF NARBERTH AND LAMPETER,

PEMBROKESHIRE,

AND PREBENDARY OF ST. DAVID'S;

AS AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

OF

THE FAVOUR OF

HIS INVALUABLE FRIENDSHIP,

THE FOLLOWING POETICAL ATTEMPT

IS GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED,

WITH SENTIMENTS OF THE TRUEST REGARD,

BY

HIS FAITHFUL AND OBLIGED SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

HUNMANBY, Nov. 1800.

A CLAUSE of Mr. SEATON'S WILL.

Dated OCT. 8, 1738.

I Give my Kislingbury Estate to the University of Cambridge for ever: the Rents of which shall be disposed of yearly by the Vice-Chancellor for the time being, as he the Vice-Chancellor, the Master of Clare-Hall, and the Greek Professor for the time being, or any two of them shall agree. Which three persons aforesaid shall give out a Subject, which Subject shall for the first Year be one or other of the Perfections or Attributes of the Supreme Being, and so the succeeding Years, till the Subject is exhausted; and afterwards the Subject shall be either Death, Judgment, Heaven, Hell, Purity of Heart, &c. or whatever else may be judged by the Vice-Chancellor, Master of Clare-Hall, and Greek Professor, to be most conducive to the honour of the Supreme Being and recommendation of Virtue. And they shall yearly dispose of the Rent of the above Estate to that Master of Arts, whose Poem on the Subject given shall be best approved by them. Which Poem I ordain to be always in English, and to be printed; the expence of which shall be deducted out of the product of the Estate, and the residue given as a reward for the Composer of the Poem, or Ode, or Copy of Verses.

WE the underwritten do assign Mr. SEATON's Reward, for the Year 1800, to FRANCIS WRANGHAM, M. A. of Trinity College, for his Poem on THE HOLY LAND; and direct the said Poem to be printed according to the Tenor of the Will.

November 2,
1800.

W. L. Mansel, Vice-Chancellor.

J. Torkington, Master of Clare-Hall.

THE HOLY LAND.



ARGUMENT.

Invocation, 1.—PALESTINE invaded by Joshua, 16.—Nativity of CHRIST, 43.—His miracles, 61. and crucifixion, 92.—Destruction of Jerusalem, 96.—Pagan, 103. and Mahometan pollutions, 113.—Crusades, 120.—Pilgrimage over France, 138. Italy, 152. and Greece, 170. (TWEDDELL, 179.) by Acre, 198. (SIR SIDNEY SMITH, &c. 207.) to Jerusalem, 230.—The present unpeopled and unproductive state of JUDÆA, 233.—Conjectures about its future condition, 245.—Allusion to the doctrine of the Millenium, 254.—Conclusion, 270.

SPIRIT so lately fled of HIM, whose lyre
'Mid its "light Task" with strains of holiest theme
Oft founded, and for *Sion's* songs renounced
Th' "accomplish'd *Sofa's*" praise: Oh yet pursue
Thy wonted ministry; and breathe again
Accents, which Seraphs, from their tuneful toil
Pausing, deem'd more than mortal! Oh, ere heaven
Receive thee, Spirit, for its loftier airs
Impatient, cast that mystic robe below —
Thy COWPER's mantle on the pilgrim Muse,
And guide to *Palestine* her destined way.

5

10

B

Eventful

Eventful *Palestine*! whose hallow'd name,
 Like some dread spell, from memory's inmost depths
 With thrilling magic wakes a shadowy train
 Of joys and woes! thy many-colour'd fate
 Whence shall the Bard begin? — From that bright hour
 When to thy land, of idol fiends the prey,
Remphan and *Rimmon* and the crew obscene
 Of *Baalim*, th' avenger ISRAEL rush'd;
 And *Jordan*, in its pride of summer-flood*
 Roll'd backward, own'd his mission. In the van
 March'd Havock, and with *Canaan's* guilty line
 Strew'd the red plain, from utmost *Sidon* north
 To *Gaza's* frontier bound. With equal stroke
 Th' impartial steel smote manhood's towering crest,
 And nerveless age: the buckler of her charms,
 Which erst repell'd the blunted shafts of war,
 Even beauty rear'd in vain. The bastion's strength,
 Whose front impregnable defied the assault
 Of sturdiest enginry, subdued by sound
 Sank: and th' auxiliar sun, to human voice
 Then first obedient, o'er th' ensanguined field
 Stay'd his fleet courfers. Such the righteous doom
 Of realms, apostate from their LORD: such doom
 The victor felt, as oft his knee forsook
 JEHOVAH's altar, or in battle bow'd
 Beneath *Philistim's* spear, or scourged with plagues
 (Disastrous option!†) or for many a year
 Crush'd by *Affyria's* fetters. Still unfill'd

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His

* "For Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest." *Josh.* iii. 15.

† 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 13.

His sin's deep measure, and his sufferings still
 Less than extreme; till Heaven's Anointed came,
 And God rejected crown'd his crimes and woes.

40

Whence was that star, which through the blue profound
 From eastern climes advancing, hung its lamp
 O'er royal *Bethlehem*; not with comet-glare
 Portending war to nations, but of ray
 Pacific? 'Twas the harbinger of morn:
 That Sun's glad herald, from whose living spring
 Natures, scarce finite, in perennial stream
 Draw floods of intellect, and bathe in light
 Strong beyond human ken. In thickest cloud
 Shrouding his native glories, lest the blaze
 Of orient DEITY with mortal flash
 Should blast the gazer's vision, He arose —
 So darken'd, yet refulgent. Through the cell
 Of maniac Guilt, exulting in his chain,
 Darted the sudden dawn. Their rigid clasp
 Instant his bonds remit: with night's foul train
 His cherish'd frenzy flies: and freed he springs
 On faith's firm wing, to liberty and heaven.

45

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60

Those deeds, high-favour'd Land, 'twas thine to see
 In that bright day of wonders, which have shed
 O'er all thy lakes and hills a holy light,
 Glowing with inexstinguishable flame,
 Though thou and thine are prostrate. In the dust
 Thy scatter'd relics shine; and radiant still,

65

By time's successive billows uneffaced,
The pilgrim tracks the footsteps of his God.

Ah! deeds — the pride of ISRAEL, and his shame!
His pride, that unto him alone display'd
The mighty Workman stood, of other eyes
Seen by reflected beam; his shame, and crime
Of costliest expiation (yet unpaid —
Though Scorn with finger stretch'd, and biting Wrong,
Untired pursue the exile) that He stood
Display'd in vain! Yet nature knew her Prince;
And prompt, as when at first th' Almighty Word
Awed the conflicting elements to peace,
Obey'd His powerful voice. Th' infuriate storm,
Which with rough pinion lash'd JUDÆA's wave,
Fled at His bidding; and in stillest calm
Th' obsequious billow slept. On bed of fire
Wan Fever pined: He spake; and ready Health
Sprang from her roseate bower, with pristine bloom
To light the faded cheek. Departed saints,
Dread spectacle! their yawning tombs forsook,
To hail the Victim-God. But ISRAEL saw,
Prompt at His voice, th' infuriate storm retire;
Saw ready Health on Fever's faded cheek
Shed pristine bloom; saw yawning sepulchres
Resign their shrouded captives — sceptic still,
And unconvinced; nay, to th' accursed tree
(Oh guilt most worthy of the *Flavian* sword,
And centuries of anguish!) doom'd his King,
And stretch'd his own MESSIAH on the cross.

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From

From the black west, in *Salem's* evil hour,
 The tempest came; and 'round her glittering domes
 Raved the resistless blast. Beneath its rage,
 Which never burst upon a nobler prey,
 Sank in wide ruin whelm'd her triple wall, 100
 And temple's golden splendour. Far away,
 Born in her summer beam, on rapid wing
 Fled revelry and song. In scornful state,
 Raised by the fierce invader, idol forms
 (*Jove*, and *Adonis*, and th' *Idalian Queen* *) 105
 Mark'd to th' indignant traveller's shrinking glance,
 Where Earth first heard her SAVIOUR's infant wail;
 Where, with deep throe, she felt His mortal pang;
 And where, death's conquering Lord, she saw Him rise
 Pure from corruption's touch, by proper force 110
 Triumphant. But imperial *Constantine*
 Redeem'd the hallow'd soil, and from their base
 The guilty mockeries push'd. In after-times,
 When his false *Koran* on the captive's breast
 With his sharp steel th' impostor *Arab* graved, 115
 Fast by GOD's fallen fane † its gorgeous horns
 The Crescent lifting high, to pious wrath

Goaded

* "Ab Hadriani temporibus usque ad imperium Constantini, per annos circiter centum octoginta, in loco resurrectionis simulachrum Jovis, in crucis rupe statua ex marmore Veneris à Gentibus posita colebatur; existimantibus persecutionis auctoribus, quòd tollerent nobis fidem resurrectionis et crucis, si loca sancta per idola polluisent. Bethlehem nunc nostram, et augustissimum orbis locum, de quo Psalmista canit (lxxxiv. 12.) "Veritas de terrâ orta est," lucus inumbrabat Thamuz, i. e. Adonidis; et in specu, ubi quondam CHRISTUS parvulus vagiit, Veneris amasius plangebatur." (HIERON. Ep. ad Paulin.)

† A Turkish mosque now usurps the site of Solomon's temple.

Goaded the stern crusader, and impell'd
To chase pollution from th' insulted hill.

O'er *Christendom's* rude plains with frantic yell 120
The red-cross Hermit flew, his crimson flag
Waving aloft, and to the Holy Tomb
Summon'd her barbarous tribes. Through climes unknown,
At his wild whoop, in rout fanatic rush'd
Th' enthusiast myriads: on their scatter'd rear 125
Hung Famine, meagre fiend, with shrivell'd lips
Blasting the yellow harvest. *Ætna* thus,
Deep-heaving, from her darksome caverns pours
The fiery furge; and sad *Sicilia* mourns
Her buried hopes. Their woes were long to tell, 130
Where all was woe; till *Salem's* rescued streets
Smoked with her tyrants' blood. Then, thrown aside
The wearied sword, and hush'd the battle's roar—
Up *Calvary's* mount the barefoot victors toil'd,
Kiss'd the blest stone, and melted into tears*. 135

Even now to *Sion's* awful solitudes,
Roused by th' inspiring theme, the Muse directs
Her arduous course. O'er *Gallia's* hostile land
Hurrying, with tearful eye she marks the shrine

By

* Vid. GIBBON, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (Chap. lviii.) Vol. XI. p. 85, and HUME, *History of England*, Vol. I. p. 333. Neither of these historians, however, seems fully to sustain the conjecture, that "six millions upon the first summons of *Peter* the Hermit assumed the cross;" though ROBERTSON (*Charles V.* Vol. I. p. 28.) states it on the concurring testimony of contemporary authors, some of whom (particularly *Fulcherius Carnotensis*, the sixth of the ten published by *Bongarsius* under the fanatic title of *Gesta Dei per Francos*) had accompanied this destructive expedition.

By her vain sons to harlot Reason rear'd ;
 From her bruised shield the lily's silver pride
 Effaced, and high-born *Capet's* nameless tomb.
 In war's dread garb the village-swain array'd,
 The noiseless city, and forsaken field
 Crowd on her glance, and force her pitying sigh.

140

145

Thus, view'd at distance, *Egypt's* giant piles
 Attract the stranger's foot. With lagging step
 He winds amazed around their ample base,
 And climbs with straining gaze th' aerial spire ;
 Within pale Death, in grisly pomp enthroned,
 Rules the twin realms of silence and the grave*.

150

Thence over *Alpine* heights, *Ausonia's* bowers
 The wanderer greets ; her plains of old renown,
 And *Mincio's* sinuous stream — Ah ! stream, no more
 Conscious of *Maro's* rural minstrelsy,
 Whose oaten reed to the responsive woods
 Sung beauteous *Amaryllis*. Other sounds
 Burst on her startled ear ; the shrill-toned fife,
 Trumpet, and drum, and all the clanging war ;
 And urge her way to *Tiber's* trophied shore.

155

160

On

† VERGNIAUD, the eloquent friend of BRISSOT, in answer to a pernicious motion of ROBESPIERRE, once observed :

“ *Vous vaincrez vos ennemis—je le crois ; mais la France, épuisée par les efforts faits pour vaincre ses ennemis extérieurs, déchirée par les factions, sera encore épuisée par les hommes, par l'argent qu'il aura fallu tirer de son sein : et craignez qu'elle ne ressemble à ces antiques monumens, qu'on retrouve en Egypte. L'étranger, qui les aperçoit, s'étonne de leur grandeur ; s'il y pénètre, qu'y trouve-t-il ?—Des cendres inanimées, et le silence des tombeaux.* ”

On *Tiber's* trophied shore, in fate's dark cloud
 His terrors quench'd, the *Latian* eagle lies ;
 Whose plume, exulting 'mid the blaze of day,
 Defied the vulgar shaft. She sees, and weeps
 Her *Rome's* departed glories. More she weeps
 The lofty spirit fled, and high disdain
 Of tyrant-power, and virtue's vestal flame.

165

Across th' *Ionian* next, by *Delphi's* steep,
 The forked mount, and famed *Castalia's* spring
 To *Athens*, scene of all her infant joys,
 Anxious she speeds. But there nor pictured porch
 Glowing with various life, nor *Virgin's* fane,
 Nor marble breathing from the *Phidian* hand
 Meets her sad eye. By *Rome's* fell lightning scath'd
 With partial blast, at *Othman's* withering touch
 Th' *Athenian* amaranth died : the servile brow
 No chaplet binds. Yet other sorrows wound,
 With keener pang, the Muse's gentle breast.

170

175

There in his early bloom, 'mid classic dust
 Once warm with grace and genius like his own,
 Her favourite * sleeps ; whom far from *Granta's* bowers

180

To

* JOHN TWEDDELL, Esq; M. A. late Fellow of *Trinity College, Cambridge*. The close of these lines may perhaps feebly recal to the reader's mind the conclusion of the subjoined Hendecasyllables, whose exquisite beauty will easily interpret the initials [(A. M. Temple) of their author.

ULLA si probitas vel ingent vis,
 Si frons ingenua aut rubens juvenus
 Morbum flecteret improbosque manes ;
 Non me carmina mæsta postularet,

Qui

To *Attic* fields the thirst of learning drew,
 Studious to cull the wise, and fair, and good.
 He could have taught the echoes of old Greece
 (Silent, since Freedom fled) their ancient strains
 Of liberty and virtue, to his soul
 Strains most congenial! But high heaven forbade.

185

Rest,

*Qui nunc ante diem domos ad atras
 It TWEDDELLIUS omnibus videndas.*

*Illi Phœbus adhuc, lyræ scienti,
 Intonsas hederâ comas revinxit;
 Et risum dedit, et sales honestis
 Junctos moribus: ut simul facetum,
 Suavemque et lepidum ac merum pudorem
 Laudarent alii, pares amarent.*

*Nec post, cùm inciperet severiores
 Curas volvere, patriæque sortem
 Sævo in gurgite nantis, ille vatum
 Sacris parcius immolavit aris:
 Minervæque recentis ac vetustæ
 Cultor sedulus, elegantioris
 Musæ latiùs arva pervolabat,
 Libans omnia mella Gratiarum.*

*Et jam cùm propius thymis Hymetti
 Labra admovent appetens, in ipso
 Haustu pallida contrahuntur ora,
 Nec dulci spolio datur potiri.*

*Frustrâ Fama tuo sonat sepulchro;
 Heu! frustrâ, Juvenis, mea ac tuorum
 Manat lacryma! Tu nequis redire;
 Nec spes ulla dolorve tangit ultrâ.
 Felix, si tibi forsan inter umbras
 Persentiscere fas sit, ossa tecum
 Illo cespite quanta conquiescant;
 Tuæ te quoque quod tegant Athenæ!*

Rest, Youth beloved! most blest, if to thy shade
 'Tis given to know, what mighty forms of Chiefs,
 Whose deathless deeds oft dwelt upon thy tongue; 190
 Of Patriots, bold like thee, with ardent tone
 T' assert their country's cause; of Bards, whose verse
 Thy *Lesbian* lyre could emulate so well,
 Repose in tombs contiguous! Rest, loved Youth,
 In thine own *Athens* laid! secure of fame, 195
 While worth and science win the world's applause.

The broad *Ægean* cross'd, with emerald isles
 Thick-studded, *Acra's** towers to soft repose
 Invite the way-worn pilgrim. There of yore
 (That day, though distant, she remembers well) 200
 The rose and lily, mingling, 'round the cross
 Twined in close folds; scarce link'd, ere royal feuds
 Sever'd their holy bond — at *Creçi* soon
 To wage sad conflict! But nor *Creçi's* lord,
 Nor *Poictiers'* fable warrior, nor the youth 205
 Who cropp'd at *Agincourt* the flower of *France*,
 E'er vanquish'd fiercer foe than He, whose sword
 Aye glittering in the foremost van of war
 Beneath these walls, still wet with recent gore,
 Stay'd the dread *Corfican*. O'er *Syrian* sands 210

Th'

* *Acra*, "*ita tempore belli sacri nuncupata.*" (RELAND. *Palæst.* III.)

This city (it will be remembered) after a two years' siege by the *German* Crusaders, under *Guy de Lusignan*, surrendered itself A. D. 1191 to the assailants, reinforced by the arrival of the kings of *England* and *France*, who for some time "acted by concert, and shared the honour and danger of every action."—"This harmony, however (the historian adds) was of short duration, and occasions of discord soon arose between these jealous and haughty princes." (HUME.)

Th' undaunted chieftain to *Byzantium** urged
 His fainting files. On purple pinion borne,
 Fleet from the poison'd south, so fell *Simoom*
 Sweeps *Lybia's* burning deserts. Loose in air,
 By health's pure gale unfann'd, his banner droops;
 And hush'd dismay precedes his dreary march.

215

Thee, gallant sailor, thee of lion heart
 Glad *Acra* sings, whose finewy arm repell'd
 Th' advancing death. But nobler meed is thine,
 Thy *Albion's* praise; and thine her greenest wreath,
 Twined in full senate round thy youthful brow.

220

And now on holy land the roving Muse
 Expatiates free; o'er *Kishon's* ancient stream,
 Which swept pale *Canaan's* despot chiefs away †,
 And flowery *Carmel*. *Tabor's* distant mount
 (Where, clothed in sun-bright beams, the GODHEAD blazed
 Effulgent) and old *Endor's* wizard groves
 Skirt the far view. *Megiddo's* winding wave
 Her onward glance descries, *Samaria's* hills,
 And heretic *Gerizim*. *Sion* last,
 In mournful ruin rising 'mid the wild,
 Bounds her long toil, and wakes her bitterest tear.

225

230

“ Is this (she cries) the land of proverb'd wealth,
 “ Flowing with nature's nectar? This the soil

“ Of

* It is known that BONAPARTE when driven back from *Acre* by SIR SIDNEY SMITH, was on his march to *Constantinople*.

† *Judg.* v. 21.

" Of vaunted opulence, whose autumn still 235
 " Most prodigal with guiltless usury
 " Restored an hundredfold the loan of spring?
 " Where are her vines, beneath their clusters bow'd?
 " Her rampired towns, her thousand villages*,
 " And consecrated *Salem*? Sunk in shade, 240
 By Hope's fair star unpierced.

But brightest dawn

The murky gloom shall chase, and gild anew
 With long-forgotten ray her rising spires.

Whether the *Gaul*, on *Egypt's* ravaged strand 245
 Still lingering, with his scorpion thong shall scourge
 Her turban'd foe; and, infidel himself,
 Wage with unconscious arm the war of heaven:
 Or the stern *Muscovite* with zeal's fierce flame
 Purge her foul stain — unknown. In tenfold night 250
 Sleeps the mysterious secret, sought in vain
 For many an age, though Knowledge lent her lamp,
 And lynx eyed Genius join'd th' exploring throng.

Yes! rise it will, *Judæa*, that blest morn
 In time's full lapse (so rapt *Isaiah* sung) 255
 Which to thy renovated plains shall give
 Their ancient lords. Imperial fortune still,
 If right the Bard peruse the mystic strain,
 Waits thee, and thousand years of sceptred joy.

With

* The *Mahometans* tell us, that " this province had a thousand villages, each of which had many fine gardens; that the grapes were so large, that five men could hardly carry a cluster of them, &c. &c. (CALMET, Art. *Palestine*.)

With furtive step the fated hour steals on,
 Like midnight thief, when from thy holy mount
 Sorrow's shrill cry, and labour's needful toil,
 And servitude shall cease; when from above,
 On living sapphire seated and begirt
 With clustering Cherubim, whose blaze outvies
 Meridian suns, through heaven's disparting arch
 Thy recognized MESSIAH shall descend;
 In royal *Salem* fix his central * throne,
 And rule with golden sway the circling world.

260

265

Oh! come that day of glory, that bright speck
 Far in the dim horizon's utmost verge
 By Prophecy's unerring finger mark'd
 To Faith's strong eye — when, with th' innumerable good
 Of every age, the white-robed saint shall stray
 Through groves of Paradise, and drink unquench'd
 Th' exhaustless stream of science! SEATON there,
 Who bade to GOD the annual hymn ascend;
 There NEWTON, whose quick glance, through farthest space
 Darting, in every page of nature's code

270

275

Saw

* The notion, that *Jerusalem* was in the middle of the earth, seems chiefly to have originated from *Ezek.* v. 5. and xxxviii. 12.; and the *Jewish* and *Christian* Commentators upon those passages (KIMCHI, RASCHI, JEROM, and THEODORET) have united to confirm it. It is a notion, however, by no means confined to the Holy City: a similar honour, if it be one, has been claimed by XENOPHON (*Hec.*) for *Athens*; and for *Delphi*, amongst others, by EURIPIDES, *Orest.* 325. where the Scholiast relates the story, upon which the epithet *μεσομφαλος* rests; and with his statement his brother annotator on PIND. *Pyth.* iv. nearly agrees. OVID (*Metam.* x. 168.) adopts the tradition; and the later *Roman* poets (CLAUDIAN. *Procl. in Conf. Mall. Theod.*, and STATIUS *Theb.* I. 118.) only differ from him by applying it, with a venial partiality to *Parnassus* in the immediate neighbourhood. PLINY likewise (*Nat. Hist.* XI. 58.) asserts this privilege of central position to *Abydos*.

Saw DEITY inscribed; and PALEY there
(For why should Praise, still lingering 'round the tomb,
Her torch sepulchral light but for the dead?)
From whose keen spear the atheist crew apall'd
Shrunk to their native night; with all, whose voice
And harmonizing life in virtue's cause
Their blended rhetoric pour'd, shall shine as stars;
Glowing in heaven's eternal firmament
With beam unchanged, while suns and worlds decay.

280

285

